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RR RUEHBZ RUEH DU RUEHJO RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHSA #1997/01 2780638
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 050638Z OCT 09
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9758
RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE
RUEHTN/AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN 7192
RUEH DU/AMCONSUL DURBAN 1275
RUEHJO/AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG 9556

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 PRETORIA 001997

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KDEM](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [SF](#) [POL](#) [PAS](#) [ECON](#)

SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA: POLITICAL NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 28-OCTOBER 2

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¶1. (SBU) This was written in partnership with the Open Source Center's Pretoria Bureau. The newsletter is open to contributions from officers in the Embassy or in the Consulates who wish to highlight political trends. Contact Madeline Seidenstricker or Jonathan Smallridge for more information, or to make contributions. The newsletter also is available on the Political Section's blog, "A View from South Africa," found on intelink.gov.

Domestic News

Service Delivery Protests Continue

¶2. (U) Residents protesting against service delivery in Sakhile informal settlement Mpumalanga have set fire to all municipal buildings. Protesters are demanding that all municipal councilors in Lekwa Municipality resign after a report that implicated several officials and councilors in fraud, poor governance, and corruption. Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs Minister Sicelo Shiceka has established a task teams to investigate the service delivery protests in Mpumalanga. Protests continue to spread as residents south of Johannesburg were up in arms on September 29, demanding better service delivery and protests continued in Johannesburg's volatile Thokoza Township, where residents demanded better housing. (SABCNEWS, September, 28, 2009)

South African Local Government Association (SALGA) Meets with Administration

¶3. (U) Minister of Planning in the Presidency Trevor Manuel has emphasized that municipalities have a responsibility to implement government priorities as listed in the Medium Term Strategic Framework. The priorities in the framework include inclusive growth, decent work, and access to quality education, rural development, and land reform. Manuel was speaking at the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) national executive committee meeting in Durban on September 30. He said that although the African National Congress has some of the best policies in the world, the challenge has always been the implementation of those policies. He emphasized the need for the Green Paper, which outlines a government direction for administration, to be accepted by members of the ruling tripartite alliance. The Congress of South African Trade Unions felt the Green Paper usurped the powers of trade unions. (The Times, September, 29, 2009)

Zuma Supports Call for More Police Power

¶4. (U) President Jacob Zuma expressed his support for an amendment to Section 49 of the Criminal Procedure Act. Zuma was speaking at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria, where he was meeting with roughly one thousand station commanders to discuss the fight against crime. He supported Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa's proposal that Section 49 of the Criminal Procedure Act be amended, giving police

more power in dealing with violent and dangerous criminals (Pretoria 1985).

Chief Demands Kingship Status

15. (U) Prince Mmelizwe Dlamini, chief of the Ntlangweni in KwaZulu-Natal, has applied to the High Court in Pretoria for an order to force the government to make a decision on his kingship. Prince Dlamini and the Ntlangweni Traditional Council want the court to force the Commission on Traditional Leadership Disputes and Claims to declare Prince Dlamini and his clan a kingdom within the next three months. Dlamini has been quoted in media reports as saying that he had no aspirations to the Zulu throne but wants the Dlamini clan to be recognized as a head kingdom. The South African QDlamini clan to be recognized as a head kingdom. The South African government currently recognizes the Zulu Kingdom as the only monarchy in country. (The Citizen, September, 30, 2009)

IFP Launches Legal Battle Against Zuma

16. (SBU) The Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) has launched a legal battle against President Zuma for alleged human rights violations of 384 political prisoners whose requests for presidential pardons have been ignored for six years. The 384 applications by prisoners were submitted five years ago but were not considered, leading to the IFP embarking on legal proceedings to force the Justice Ministry to attend to them. The decision to initiate legal action against Zuma is a result of a Constitutional Court ruling that said the legal action should have been lodged against the Presidency rather than the Justice Ministry because the President grants presidential pardons. IFP parliamentarian Koos van der Merwe said this has been a lengthy and painful battle to have the rights of these prisoners recognized and the IFP has been the driver in the entire process and will continue to do so. (Note: The timing of the legal battle is interesting as there are rumors that the Zuma-led ANC wants to form an alliance with the IFP. The decision to push the issue now could

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be the result of the IFP trying to force Zuma to make concessions or a sign that talks about a coalition are not going well. End Note.) (The Times, October, 01, 2009)

RSA: Minister Says SANDF Service Commission Will Not Replace Military Unions

17. (U) Pretoria News reports that the Military Service Commission, which will regulate the conditions of service of all soldiers, will not replace unions in the army, according to Defense and Military Veterans Minister Lindiwe Sisulu. She said the commission, which is an interim set-up, would assist her to establish a separate dispensation for soldiers outside of the public service and to regulate salaries, recruitment, transfers, promotions and dismissals in the defense force. This follows clashes last month between members of the SANDF [South African National Defense Force] Union and police outside the Union Buildings when they protested over poor salaries. Although government officials, including Zuma, have vowed to ban military unions due to national security concerns, COSATU has stated its intention to resist these attempts. However, Sisulu insisted that the new commission is merely intended to ensure that soldiers are treated differently from the public service. [Pretoria News Online in English -- Website of local daily, privately owned by Independent Newspaper Company; URL: <http://www.pretorianews.co.za/>]

Editorial Views 'Suspicious' Attempts by Alliance Partners To Take Over ANC

18. (U) Sunday Times reports that in the months leading up to the ANC's 2007 conference, some figures in the Thabo Mbeki fold were warning of its leftist partners wanting to use "Trojan Horse tactics" to seize control of the party. Similar trends were seen at the conferences in Mafikeng and Stellenbosch in 1997 and 2002 respectively, with the Left pushing to get candidates ideologically in tune with or well disposed to it elected onto the ANC's National Executive Committee. Following the SACP's [South African Communist Party] "gains" of Polokwane and the brazen manner in which they have been going about their "power grab", there has been a backlash by

mainstream ANC leaders against the perceived takeover of the ANC by the Left. With the 2011 municipal elections and the next national conference in 2012, the Left will likely seek to increase its influence during these key milestones. SACP General Secretary Blade Nzimande warned of the "new anti-left tendency" and brand of "narrow Africanism" within the ANC that had to be nipped in the bud. [Sunday Times Online in English -- Website of privately owned Sunday newspaper; URL: <http://www.thetimes.co.za/>]

COSATU Calls for Nationalization of Reserve Bank

¶9. (U) Business Report reports that COSATU wants the South African Reserve Bank to be nationalized, as highlighted in the final declaration of the labor federation's four-day 10th national congress. A resolution adopted at the congress said that over the past years South Africa's monetary policy continued to have a one-sided focus on inflation with negative consequences for industrialization, social development and job creation. Dennis Dykes, Nedbank's chief economist, said the Reserve Bank is guided by the government and the current structure works well, adding that if it was changed it would send the wrong signal to foreign investors. Outgoing Reserve Bank governor Tito Mboweni echoed these sentiments, saying that the bank would not be nationalized. [Johannesburg Qsaying that the bank would not be nationalized. [Johannesburg Business Report Online in English -- Website of business and financial publication, privately owned by Independent Newspaper Company; URL: <http://www.businessreport.co.za/>]

----- International News -----

Security Threat to US Facilities "Emanated from Al-Qaeda Splinter Group"

¶10. (U) Pretoria News reports that the security threat, which led to the temporary closure of US government installations around South Africa, is alleged to have emanated from an al-Qaeda splinter group. According to well-placed security sources, the group telephoned the US embassy in Pretoria on Monday and apparently gave detailed plans about alleged attacks planned against several US government buildings in the country, including the US embassy and USAID offices. It is thought that the killing of al-Qaeda operative, Saleh Ali Saleh Nabhan, in Somalia by US forces earlier this month may have prompted the threat. South Africa intelligence agents from the National Intelligence Agency, police crime intelligence unit, as well as operatives from the South African Secret Service, are working with US intelligence officials to track down those behind the threat. US Embassy spokeswoman Sharon Hudson-Dean said that additional security measures have been put in place, including the deployment of static police units to the US embassy and consular-general offices in Cape Town and Durban. All US government

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facilities in South Africa resumed normal operations on 25 September. [Pretoria News Online in English -- Website of local daily, privately owned by Independent Newspaper Company; URL: <http://www.pretorianews.co.za/>]

President Zuma's Address at 2d Africa-South America Summit

¶11. (U) Zuma delivered an address at the 2nd Africa-South America Summit (ASA) on 26 September 2009 in Margarita Island, Venezuela. The summit was a historic event aimed at promoting South-South cooperation and enhancing the mutually beneficial partnership that has developed over the years between Africa and South America. The Margarita Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the summit focuses on advancing the development agenda of the South, particularly with regard to social upliftment, rural development, tourism, renewable energy, climate change, sport, education and cultural exchange. Skills transfer in specific sectors, such as health, foreign direct investment into Africa, cooperation in peace and security efforts, good governance, and cooperation on efforts to reduce poverty was identified as a key priority for Africa-South America cooperation, as well as the reform of the current global multilateral system following the devastating impact of the global

financial crisis. [Pretoria Department of International Relations and Cooperation in English -- Official government website; URL: <http://www.dfa.gov.za>]

Deputy FM Concludes Visit to Tehran

¶12. (U) Department of International Relations and Cooperation Deputy Minister Ebrahim Ebrahim visited Iran from September 27 to October 1 to lead the 11th session of the South Africa-Iran Joint Commission, established in 1995. South African Ambassador to Iran, Ebrahim Saley, welcomed Ebrahim. Ebrahim's visit comes within the context of South Africa's commitment to enhance and broaden the scope of the relationship and cooperate with Iran in trade and economic matters within the framework of South-South Cooperation. In October 1 remarks, Ebrahim thanked the Government of Iran and pronounced the Joint Commission meeting successful. Ebrahim said Iran continues to be one of South Africa's biggest markets in the Middle East. Ebrahim said South Africa shares Iran's view of a stable Middle Eastern region and strongly believes in the creation of a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Ebrahim said South Africa supports Iran's peaceful nuclear program and continued cooperation with the IAEA. (DIRCO Briefing, September 27)

China-Africa Ministerial Meeting on the Horizon

¶13. (U) The 4th Ministerial Meeting of the Forum for China-Africa Cooperation will be held on November 8-9 in Sharm El Sheik, Egypt. The Forum will be co-chaired by Egypt and the Peoples' Republic of China. (DIRCO Briefing, September 29)

Madagascar Tries Playing Hard Ball

¶14. (U) Madagascar may refuse visas to officials from the South African Development Community (SADC) after African nations blocked Andry Rajoelina, who seized power in a March coup, from addressing the United Nations. SADC mediators, led by former Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano, are expected to attend an International Contact Group meeting on October 6. (EWN, September 30)

GIPS